

REMARKS

On page 2 of the Final Action, claim 1 was objected to because of the informalities. On page 2 of the Final Action, claims 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. On page 3 of the Final Action, claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamada.

In view of the objection and rejections, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 5, and claim 8 has been amended to be independent form including the limitations of claims 1 and 7. Claims 4, 5 and 7 have been canceled. Claim 9 has been amended to clarify the features of the invention.

Yamada cited in the Final Action discloses a folding cup holder. In Yamada, a tray 9 is rotationally attached to a base plate 1 by a shaft 14 and has latch arms 11 engaging a leaf spring 7 (Fig. 4) or metal plate 30 (Fig. 8A) attached to the base plate 1. When using the cup holder, fork ends 11a of the latch arms 11 engage the leaf springs 7 as shown in Fig. 4, or fork ends 11b of the latch arms 11 engage engagement holes 6a as shown in Fig. 8A.

In Yamada, when excessive force is applied to the tray 9 at the use position shown in Fig. 8A, since the fork ends 11b are resilient, the fork ends 11b elastically deform in a narrowing direction, whereby the fork ends 11b can easily pass through the engagement holes 6a. Then, as shown in Fig. 8B, the latch arms 11 displace from the through holes 6, and the tray 9 swing down to a lower side. Accordingly, even when excessive force is applied to the tray 9, it is possible to prevent the tray 9 from being broken (column 5, lines 10 to 25).

A hook device for suspending an object in claims 1 and 8 of the invention basically comprises a case member having a stopping portion, a hook main portion disposed in the case member to be rotatable between a store position and a use position and having an elastic member, and an engaging portion provided at the elastic

member of the hook main portion to engage the stopping portion so that the hook main portion is stopped at the use position with a predetermined open angle.

In the invention, at least one of the stopping portion and the engaging portion has an inclined surface. When a load is applied to the hook main portion in the use position in a direction such that the hook main portion further opens, the elastic member is urged in a direction that the stopping portion further engages the engaging portion to thereby prevent further opening of the hook main portion.

In claim 1, it is clarified that the hook main portion has a bottom portion from which the elastic member projects rearwardly and upwardly. Therefore, when the hook main portion in the use position is urged to further open as shown in Fig. 3, the engaging portion further engages or bites the stopping portion to prevent further opening of the hook main portion. The engaging portion does not disengage from the stopping portion.

In Yamada, the latch arm 11 projects from a middle area of the tray 9 rearwardly and downwardly. In the invention, the elastic member projects rearwardly and upwardly from the bottom of the hook main portion. The position and orientation of the elastic member of claim 1 of the invention are different from those of Yamada.

In the Response to Argument of the Final Action, the Examiner stated, with reference to Fig. 8A in Yamada, that there is in fact a load in which the engagement of the engaging portion and the stopping portion prevents further opening of the main hook portion. Certainly, when using the cup holder of Yamada, a load is applied to the tray to open until the fork ends 11b of the latch arms 11 engage the engagement holes 6a as shown in Fig. 8A. Similarly, when using the hook device of the invention, a load is applied to the main hook portion to open until the engaging portion engages the stop portion as shown in Fig. 3.

However, in Yamada, when excessive load is applied to the tray in the use position shown in Fig. 8A, the fork ends 11b are formed to pass through the engagement holes 6a, i.e. disengage from the base plate 1, as clearly shown in Fig. 8B. On the other hand, in the invention, the elastic member projects rearwardly and upwardly from the bottom of the hook main portion, and the inclined surface is formed at one of the stopping portion and the engaging portion. Thus, when excessive load is applied to the main hook portion in the use position shown in Fig. 3, the stopping portion further engages the engaging portion to thereby prevent further opening of the hook main portion, as clearly shown in Fig. 5. Namely, the engaging portion does not disengage from the stopping portion. Accordingly, the hook main portion of the invention functions differently from the tray in Yamada because of the inclined surface. The features in claim 1 of the invention are not disclosed in Yamada.

In claim 8, in the hook device having the basic structure as explained above, the engaging portion has an inwardly inclined surface relative to a radial line extending from a rotational axis of the hook main portion. When a load is applied to further open the hook main portion in the use position, since the elastic member is flexible and the engaging portion has the inwardly inclined surface, the elastic member is moved toward the stopping portion to surely engage therewith.

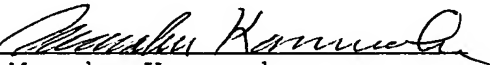
In Yamada, the fork ends have inclined surfaces, but it is formed such that when excessive force is applied to the tray 9 in the use position, the fork ends 11b elastically deform in a narrowing direction, whereby the fork ends 11b can easily pass through the engagement holes 6a. As explained above, the fork ends 11b in Yamada move in a way different from the engaging portion of the invention because of the inclined surface. The inclined surface of in claim 8 of the invention is not disclosed in Yamada.

As explained above, the features of the invention as recited in claims 1 and 8 are not disclosed or even suggested in Yamada.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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